

REMARKS

Applicants have amended the claims to more particularly define the invention taking into consideration the outstanding application. Claim 1 has been amended to remove the optional aspect of the claimed invention. With the deletion of optional, claim 1 requires the antigens are reversibly bound to antibodies specific for the antigen. Applicants most respectfully submit that all of the claims are in full compliance with 35 USC 112 and are now ready for an examination on the merits and an early indication of allowable subject matter.

Applicants elect the Group I invention drawn to a coated metal surface on a support which includes claims 1-7. The election is made with traverse.

As stated in the paragraph bridging pages 3 and 4 of the Official Action, the inventions listed as Groups I-IV do not relate to a single inventive concept under PCT Rules because they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: the special technical feature in Groups I-IV is the coated metal surface on a solid support, wherein the coating consists of a self-assembled monolayer (SAM) of oligo (ethylene glycol)-, OEG-, terminated amide group-containing alkyl thiols firmly attached to the metal surface via the thiol-end and low molecular weight antigens bound via an amide-group to the SAM-forming OEG molecule, wherein the alkyl portion has 1 -20 methylene groups, wherein the OEG portion has 1-15 ethylene oxy units, and the antigens are optionally reversibly bound to antibodies specific for the antigens.

Further, according to the Official Action, this element cannot be a special technical feature under PCT Rule 13.2 because the element is shown in the prior art, and the Examiner cites US Patent No. 6,699,665. Applicants cannot find the expression "low molecular weight antigens bound via the amide-group to the SAM-forming OEG molecule" in column 9, lines 42-46.


The only place where applicants find an antigen mentioned is in column 8, line 21, which describes membrane patterning where the reactions are accomplished by delivering the reagents via through-holes in the membrane. These reactions may be activation reactions and among the activation reactions is mentioned affinity (i.e.,

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antigen-antibody) interaction. Applicants cannot see that the US patent would anticipate the Group I Claims 1-7, and therefore applicants believe all the claims have a common technical feature and should be allowed in the same application. Accordingly, it is most respectfully requested that unity of invention exists and that all of the claims be examined on the merits.

In view of the above amendments to the claims, election of the Group I invention with traverse, an early action on the application is now in order and is most respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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